

# Memorandum



**Date:** May 03, 2005

**To:** Honorable Chairman Joe A. Martinez and  
Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** George M. Burgess  
County Manager

**Subject:** Juvenile Services Department

Agenda Item No. 9(K)(1)(A)

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board adopt the attached resolution approving the County Manager's recommendation to create the Juvenile Services Department by transferring employees of the Division of Prevention Services (DPS) and the Juvenile Treatment for Safer Communities (TASC) Division from the Department of Human Services (DHS) to the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC). The creation of the Juvenile Services Department will combine staff that works with arrested juveniles and allow the County to significantly improve services and realize budgetary savings. Through consolidation, the County creates a department that has a specific mission to serve arrested juveniles and juveniles at risk of being arrested.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since 2003 staff and juvenile justice stakeholders have been reviewing of the juvenile justice services provided by the County for the purposes of consolidating and improving services. A review committee was formed to conduct a through analysis of county services relating to juvenile intake, assessment, treatment, case management and follow-up, and information and data management. The committee issued the attached report and the FY 04-05 budget recommended the creation of a new juvenile services department. Although, the FY 2004-05 Resource Allocation Plan included the recommendation to combine the juvenile intake and assessment programs in the JAC and DHS, an alternate recommendation was adopted by the Board to allow the reorganization to be considered by the then Public Safety and Human Services Committees, outside of the budget process.

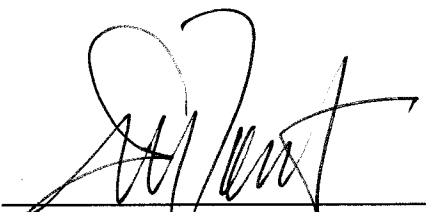
Currently, the JAC processes all arrested juveniles and both the JAC and DHS provide assessment and diversion programs. The creation of a Juvenile Services Department (JSD) will address many systemic improvements and allow the County to approach juvenile justice in a more holistic manner, focusing exclusively on troubled children, arrested or not, to keep them out of the criminal justice system. These systemic improvements include:

- Elevates juvenile justice to higher profile in the County, facilitating our ability to bring in more funds to County and juvenile justice providers and allows the JSD to utilize advancements to expand services to at-risk juveniles, not just arrested juveniles;
- The expanded mission allows the JSD to develop alternatives to arrest with law enforcement agencies.
- Implements Special Arrest Process to help children ages 12 and under who are arrested.
- Expands TASC assessments to 24-hour service with consolidated staff.

- Applies system-wide use of technology developed at JAC to allow for the measurement of re-arrest and better outcomes of case management.
- Allows all diversion programs in the County to begin days after arrest instead of weeks. It will also allow the County to document re-arrest rates for all diversion participants.

The Directors of DHS and JAC are committed to providing better services for children and their families and have worked closely together on the reorganization. The consolidation plan will be implemented upon approval by the Board of County Commissioners. All DHS employees working in the identified divisions will transfer to the JAC. No layoffs of any positions will occur. During the initial transition period, all employees (JAC and DHS) will continue to perform their job duties and report to their current offices. The JAC Agency Partnership (juvenile justice stakeholders that include the Department of Human Services) will work with JSD employees in order to redefine the processes and reorganize the new department over a period of six months. All stakeholders have reviewed the new plan. There are no known objections from stakeholders to the reorganization. The consolidation should function as the newly organized department by October 2005.

Over the past four years, the JAC has received over \$4 million in Congressional earmarks to develop innovations and new technology for juvenile justice. This consolidation allows the County to apply those across the system. Many advancements developed at the JAC are currently being used in multiple cities and states across the United States. (Reference Attachment 1, Letter from U.S. Department of Justice to Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart).



---

Susanne M. Torriente  
Assistant County Manager



# MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairman Joe A. Martinez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** May 3, 2005

**FROM:** Robert A. Ginsburg  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item No. 9(K)(1)(A)

Please note any items checked.

- ☐ "4-Day Rule" ("3-Day Rule" for committees) applicable if raised
- ☐ 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- ☐ 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- ☐ Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- ☐ Budget required
- ☐ Statement of fiscal impact required
- ☐ Bid waiver requiring County Manager's written recommendation
- ☐ Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Manager's report for public hearing
- ☐ Housekeeping item (no policy decision required)
- ☐ No committee review

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor  
Veto \_\_\_\_\_  
Override \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda Item No. 9(K)(1)(A)  
05-03-05

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF THE JUVENILE SERVICES DEPARTMENT BY TRANSFERRING THE DIVISION OF PREVENTION SERVICES (DPS) AND THE JUVENILE TREATMENT FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES (TASC) DIVISION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO THE JUVENILE ASSESSMENT CENTER (JAC)

**WHEREAS**, this Board desires to accomplish the purposes outlined in the accompanying memorandum and attachments, copies of which are incorporated herein by reference,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA**, that this Board hereby authorizes and approves the recommendation of the County Manager on behalf of Miami-Dade County.

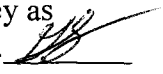
The foregoing resolution was offered by Commissioner , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

	Joe A. Martinez, Chairman	
	Dennis C. Moss, Vice-Chairman	
Bruno A. Barreiro		Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler
Jose "Pepe" Diaz		Carlos A. Gimenez
Sally A. Heyman		Barbara J. Jordan
Dorrian D. Rolle		Natacha Seijas
Katy Sorenson		Rebeca Sosa
Sen. Javier D. Souto		

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 3rd day of May, 2005. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
BY ITS BOARD OF COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

Approved by County Attorney as  
to form and legal sufficiency. 

Glenn A. Saks

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Office of Communications

Washington, D.C. 20531

OCT 01 2004

The Honorable Lincoln Diaz-Balart  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0921

Dear Congressman Diaz-Balart:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Miami-Dade Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC). We greatly appreciate your acknowledging the value of the JAC program and the promise of this program's innovative assessment process and integrated programmatic approach. The Office of Justice Programs and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) are very pleased that the Miami-Dade JAC program was also recognized by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy as an exemplary program.

OJJDP has worked with the Miami-Dade County JAC for some time, and has been a partner in establishing the JAC in Miami-Dade and other locations within Florida. OJJDP also supports Policy Research Associates (PRA), who have worked with the Juvenile Assessment Centers in developing model screening and assessment instruments to help identify mental health needs of juveniles coming into a JAC.

The Miami-Dade JAC database is a powerful information gathering tool that provides uniquely detailed information on juveniles in the juvenile justice system. This information has the potential to assist both in the present treatment of juveniles and future evaluation of the program itself. This project has even greater potential for early and expanded intervention, if information sharing and data links are established between the County's child welfare and juvenile justice systems. OJJDP staff and JAC leadership have discussed expansion of information gathering to include information on non-offending or status-offending referrals. Such information would provide important data and a more complete understanding of juvenile behavior, which, in turn, should be a great help in developing an improved overall program.

OJJDP is pleased with the Miami-Dade Juvenile Assessment Center's innovative work linking assessment information with treatment decisions. Thank you again for your interest in this program and your support of juvenile justice issues.

Sincerely,

  
Nancy Segerdahl Ayers  
Director



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** George M. Burgess  
County Manager

**DATE:** July 5, 2004

**FROM:** Howard Piper, Review Committee  
Chairperson  
Sharon Abrams  
Scott Mendelsberg  
Maite Tabernilla

**SUBJECT:** Juvenile Services Review:  
Committee Recommendations

### SUMMARY

In September 2003 a Review Committee was formed to review activities pertaining to juvenile intake, assessment and case management and to recommend an organizational structure and associated information management concept. The Committee conducted several site visits and over thirty stakeholder interviews in assessing current operations. The Committee recommends creation of a new Juvenile Services Department with overall oversight and management of services for troubled (delinquent, dependent, at risk and, child in need of services) juveniles countywide. This requires a consolidation of current services provided at the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC), all relevant programs and services now offered by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and if possible, the Teen Court operated by Metro Miami Action Plan (MMAP). The Committee also recommends that the County establish a strict timeline for expediently consolidating all intake, assessment and treatment planning and case management under this single entity. Responsibilities of this department will encompass not only arrested juveniles but include the broad spectrum of social services required to address the needs of troubled youth in the County and builds on the best approaches offered by JAC, DHS and current technological capabilities. Concerning the use of technology, the Committee recommends a technology concept that not only supports the new organization but is designed to increase information flow, support performance tracking, support scalability and should result in reduced operation and maintenance costs.

The above recommendations do not include consolidation of juvenile programs managed by the courts such as the drug court. Additionally, the committee does not recommend inclusion of children services for ages 6 and under such as Head Start and Child Development Services in the recommended organization. In the case of the latter, the Committee reserves opinions until a study of the children's services is completed. Concerning the Teen Court, while an in-depth assessment was not completed, should the new juvenile department/entity be created, the committee recommends an assessment to determine if placement of the Teen Court will be within the new department is the best alternative.

### BACKGROUND

The County provides services to arrested juveniles (ages 6 through 18 years) primarily through two departments; the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) and, the Department of Human Services (DHS). However, in the several months prior to this study, important issues surfaced surrounding the future of how juvenile services should be structured and managed to realize efficiencies, scale

economies and improved effectiveness of juvenile services programs. While there have been several opinions expressed, stakeholders have not agreed on a structure and associated business process to effectively manage juvenile intake, assessment, treatment, case management, research support and post treatment follow-up. In September 2003 a Review Committee (Committee) was formed to review County activities and policies pertaining to juvenile services and to recommend an organizational structure and associated data and information management concept that address user needs.

## REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The Review Committee focused primarily on developing high level processes and an appropriate organization structure that best benefits the juvenile population. Subsequently, the committee developed a data and information structure and communication concept that complements the process and meets the needs of the proposed organization and its partners. Additionally, the committee endeavored to develop recommendations that address the need for increased operating efficiencies and cost savings.

Using a service quality and results approach, the Committee gathered information about JAC, DHS and other organizations relating to juvenile intake, assessment, treatment, case management, follow-up and information and data management. The committee also reviewed previously drafted documents including the Comprehensive Strategy Initiative Plan, the Comprehensive Health and Social Services Master Plan and conducted limited research regarding juvenile programs nationally and statewide. Through input from various County sources, the Committee interviewed more thirty stakeholders involved with juvenile services in the County. Interviewees included representatives from JAC, DHS, Youth Crime Task Force, Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Miami-Dade County Courts, University of Miami, the State Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, National Demonstration Project (NDP) researchers, the Mayor's office, the Alliance for Human Services and the Children's Trust.

Using the findings, the Committee:

- Developed a high level "as-is" process flow of juvenile assessment, case management and diversion processes at the JAC, DHS, the Department of Juvenile Justice and associated entities such as the Courts, DCF, Teen Court, State Attorney and Public Defender.
- Identified duplication and possible efficiencies related to business functions.
- Developed a high level "to be" business process philosophy drawing from best practices for service delivery to juveniles and identified gaps in the County's approach.
- Assessed competing options for a suitable organizational structure and developed a recommend organizational structure.
- Developed an information and data management structure to support the proposed organizational structure to meet the needs of the user community.
- Evaluated the funding impact of the recommend organizational structure.

## **SUMMARY FINDINGS**

### **Existing Operations**

On average, approximately 15,000 juveniles (85% of arrested juveniles) between the ages of 6 through 18 years old enter the JAC (Figure 1). Approximately 2,000 of these juveniles are eligible for the Post Arrest Diversion Program (PAD) currently administered by the JAC. Juveniles that fail to complete the JAC administered PAD or whose parents/guardians refuse participation in PAD are generally diverted to the DHS programs. The remaining 12,000 to 13,000 juveniles are processed through the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and the State Attorney's Office. Once the State Attorney determines eligibility for diversion, eligible juveniles are diverted to DHS for further assessments and treatment. Diversion to DHS accounts for approximately 4,000 juveniles, another 500 are diverted to the Teen Court while, the remaining juveniles enter the courts system. Juveniles processed through the courts do not typically receive immediate social service treatments irrespective of need, unless it is court mandated. However, some juveniles may be ordered to enter the DHS programs a part of their court sentence.

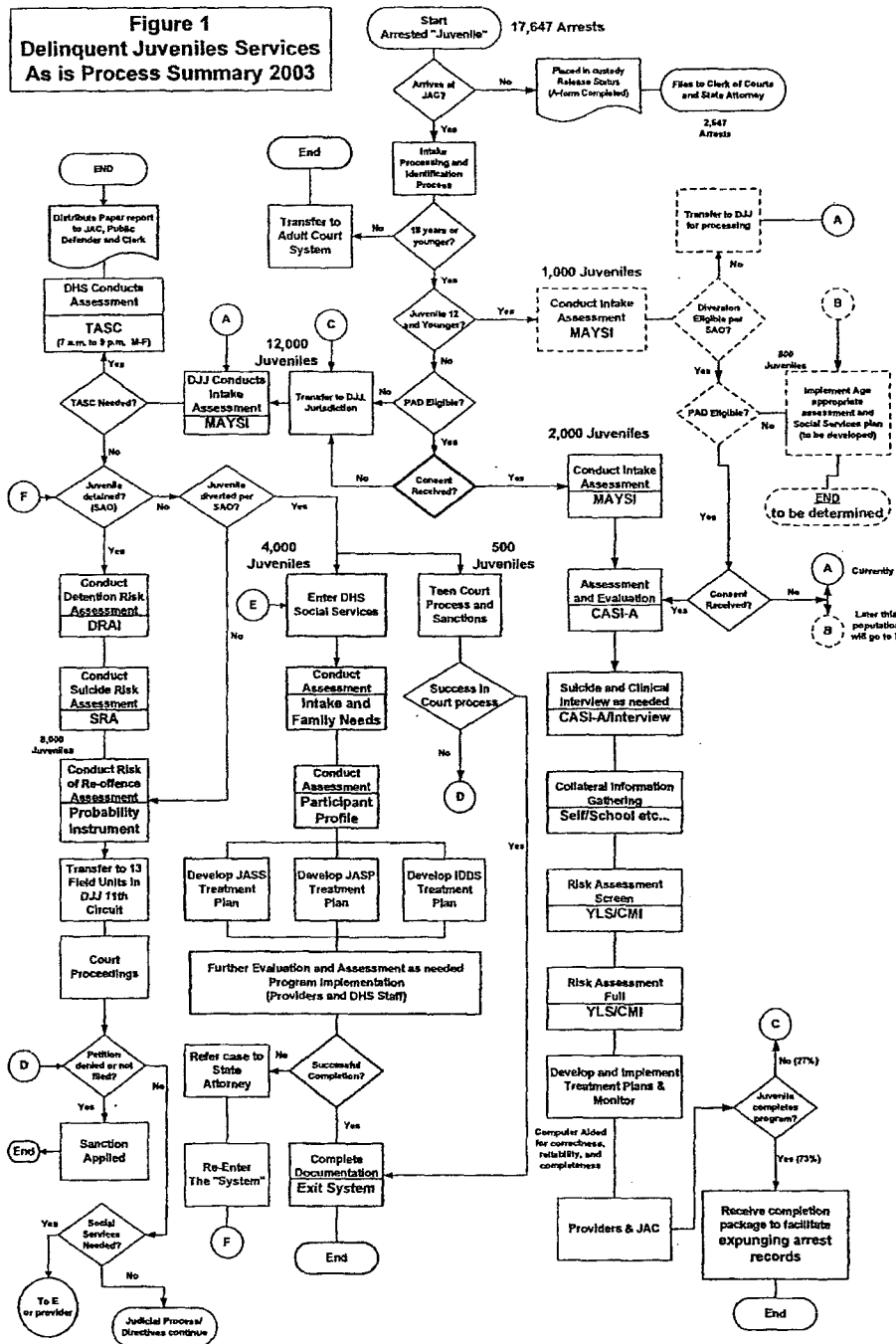
Of the arrested juvenile population, 800 to 1000 are 12 years old and under and may benefit from age appropriate post arrest social services treatment. Currently, these 12 and under juveniles are processed in the traditional manner through the courts, PAD or diverted to programs administered by DHS. However, in early 2004, JAC began to take steps to implement an age appropriate treatment program to serve this population of juveniles thereby reducing the number of juveniles entering other sections of the juvenile justice system.

The Committee found that the overall approach to juvenile social services is disjointed, inefficient, results in some duplication of efforts and competition among participant departments for the limited resources and funding, sometimes for similar programs. These and other past situations have resulted in competing philosophies, poor communication among entities, distrust and untenable fragmentation in County juvenile services.

### **Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC)**

The JAC was formed as a partnership between agencies involved in the juvenile arrest and treatment processes including law enforcement, DJJ, State Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, DHS and the Courts and began operations in 1997. The mission of the JAC was to assist law enforcement with juvenile booking services, intake, positive identification and case processing. JAC, with a staff of 62, processes approximately 15,000 arrested juveniles per year.

Largely as a result of the National Demonstration Program (NDP), JAC has gone beyond its original mission and began providing social services type programs that would normally be the purview of DHS. Unlike other social services programs for delinquent youth, based on the efforts of the JAC, juveniles successfully completing the PAD program can have their arrest records expunged. On numerous occasions, JAC has made it clear that while their mission is booking services, they are much more than simply a booking service for law enforcement. Consequently, under the auspices of the NDP, JAC began operating the PAD program. JAC offers juvenile assessments, develops treatment plans and provides case management for approximately 2,000 eligible first time misdemeanor offenders each year.



JAC utilizes a standardized assessment and screening tool (MAYSI) which computes individualized scores based on a juvenile's answers to 52 questions. Using the results of these screenings, JAC determines if the juvenile requires further assessment to identify issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, emotional and mental disorders. Subsequently, JAC develops implements and monitors treatment plans individually tailored to each juvenile.

Since delving into the provision of social services to juveniles, JAC had effectively demonstrated

that the County can be successful in adopting modern approaches and treatment philosophies for providing juvenile services. These include the use of standardized, validated and reliable assessment tools and use of technology tools to assist with treatment planning, case management, data reporting, analyses, new program development and research support. Additionally, as mentioned above, JAC is preparing to launch an age appropriate program to provide diversion service for juveniles 12 years old and under.

All other post arrest diversion programs are currently administered by DHS except the Teen Court operations.

The major positives of the JAC operation are:

- Significantly reduced processing times for arrested juveniles that also allow law enforcement officers to return to duty in a much shorter time.
- Provides positive identification of all arrested youth thereby providing a mechanism to accurately track first time and repeat offenders.
- PAD eligible juveniles can complete intake, assessment, meet with a case manager and have a treatment plan designed prior to exiting the JAC.
- Use of standardized assessment tools that have undergone some level of validity and reliability testing and are consistent with best practices for providing assessments.
- An emphasis on and the use of technology enables information gathering for analysis to continuously validate the assessment tools, support new research, new program development and improved case management.
- Has the potential to facilitate post treatment follow-up and tracking as necessary.
- Operates as a 24-hour, 7-days per week facility.
- Aggressive case management and provider follow-up.

#### **Department of Human Services (DHS)**

The Delinquency Prevention Services (DPS) division of DHS with a staff of 50 provides social services to diverted juveniles through the state-funded Juvenile Alternative Service Program (JASP). JASP initially served misdemeanor offenders and in about 2000, DJJ modified JASP's mission to serve selected felony and violent misdemeanor offenders. In 1990 the County funded expansion of juvenile diversion through the Juvenile Alternative Sanctions System (JASS). This allowed for repeat offenders and eligible felons to benefit from diversion. Additionally, DPS provides services to juveniles under the state-funded Intensive Delinquency Diversion Services (IDDS) program for high-risk juveniles. It is to be noted that DHS is of the opinion that the department was the first County entity to provide PAD-type juvenile services. However, PAD services are now provided by the JAC. Repeat misdemeanor juvenile offenders and those that fail to complete PAD are diverted to DPS for services

DHS also manages the Dade Role Models Programs funded through the Community Development Block Grant and the Shoplifting Diversionary program. Additionally, DHS provides staff support to various boards related to juvenile issues including the Criminal Justice Council and the Youth Crime Task Force in addition to providing juvenile TASC (for alcohol and drug abuse) assessments for juveniles not participating in or eligible for PAD.

In providing social services treatment to delinquent youth, DPS formulated its own assessment tools and case management model that have evolved over the years. These tools are based on community outreach and experience of DHS managers and staff but are not tested for validity and reliability. The assessment process includes interviews with the referred juvenile and the representing family member. Consequently, staff in conjunction with their supervisors develops a treatment plan using the assessment, MAYSI data provided by DJJ and the Miami-Dade public schools where available. While anecdotal evidence, data on completion rates, and some workload measures suggest that the DPS programs may have positively impacted diverted youth, the methodology employed easily leads to inconsistent case management, data and information management and performance gaps.

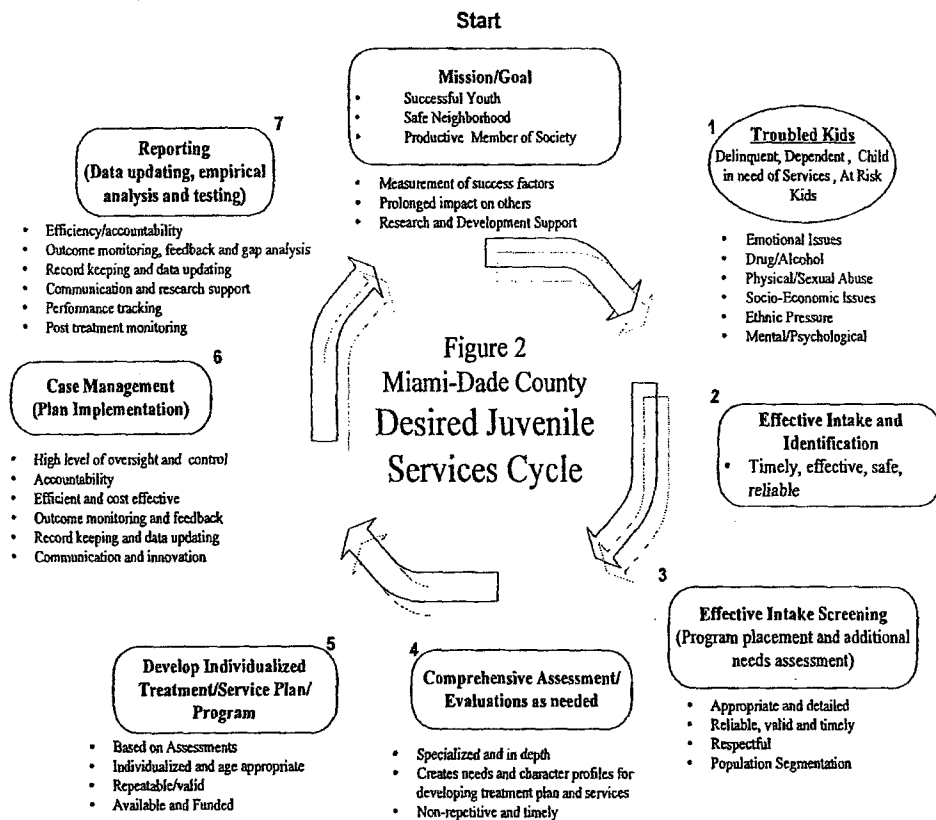
The major positives of the DPS operation include:

- Extremely valuable resource for on the job social services expertise.
- Extensive experience in delivering social services within communities.
- Close collaboration between supervisors and case workers in finalizing treatment plans.
- Provision of treatment in the community (field community offices or in the home) where attendance is most convenient for the juvenile.
- Well established field network as a result decades of operation.

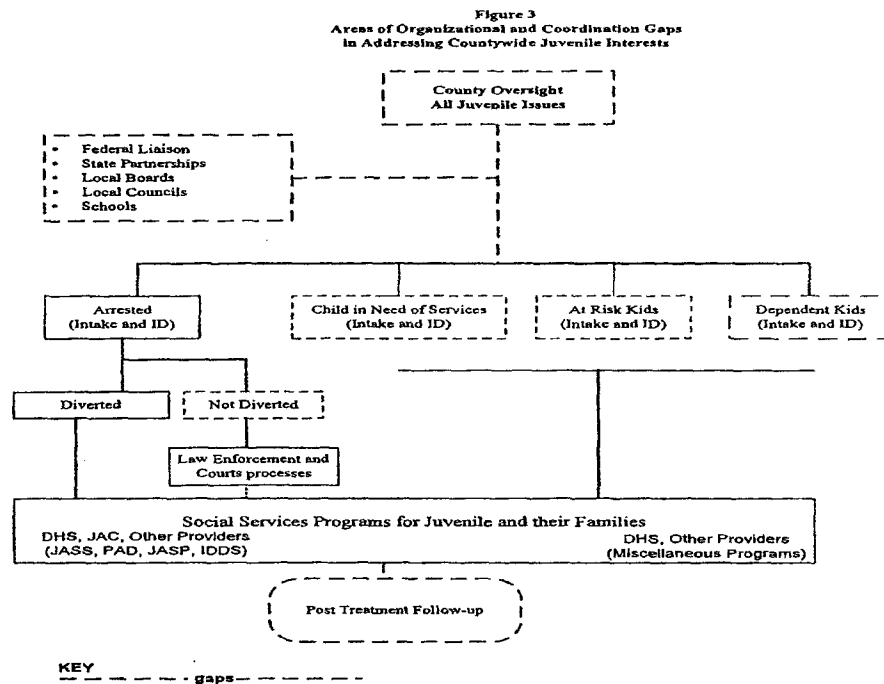
#### **Countywide Juvenile Services Issues**

The County provides a number of social services to juveniles (arrested or not) through various agencies. An arrested juvenile in most cases faces the same environmental conditions that impact other youth that have not been arrested but who are also troubled. The Committee's research indicates that the best approach to providing juvenile services is to adopt a Juvenile Services Cycle (Figure 2) aimed at outcome oriented social programs and treatment of our troubled youth as opposed to an emphasis on workload. As detailed in Figure 2, the County's mission (courtesy of DHS and JAC) is to administer timely social services to juveniles with the aim of developing successful and productive youth that in effect, will lead to safer neighborhoods.

While DPS and the JAC treat delinquent juveniles, these youths form only a portion of the troubled juvenile population. The county's youth, not unlike other counties, fall into four main categories; Delinquent (arrested), Dependent, Child in Need of Services and At Risk Kids. From the Committee's review and interviews, juveniles in all categories are faced with a variety of issues including emotional issues; drug, alcohol, physical and sexual abuse; ethnic pressures and; mental and psychological problems. While all four groups face these issues, what differentiates the delinquents is the arrest event. Intuitively, the County's juvenile social programs should be built on a consistent philosophy of getting effective services to all troubled youth in a timely manner as opportunities arise. Youth entering the JAC, and subsequently the Post Arrest Diversion Program (PAD) and the Delinquency Prevention Services (DPS) in DHS therefore, constitute only a fraction of the population to be served by the County. The remaining population of troubled youth includes delinquents who are not diverted and all juveniles in the remaining three categories.



Based on the above, the Committee observed that there is no single entity in the county that has overall oversight and responsibility for juvenile issues. Such an entity (Figure 3) would be the "go to" place for the public for juvenile assistance, programs coordination, leveraging resources and sourcing additional funding to advance juvenile causes in the County. Instead, services are divided among multiple interests, departments and providers with no central management. Without central coordination and management of resources, the County's ability to attract new funding, enforce accountability of providers, and increase efficiencies and to track overall program effectiveness is severely hampered. Consequently, the County is not optimizing its use of resources.



Added to these findings, the Committee noted several other issues related to juvenile assessment, treatment and case management that must be addressed.

- Topping the list is the massive breakdown of the original JAC partnership, the lack of communication, distrust and the distractions caused by past events. This communication gap has to be bridged to facilitate a true continuum of services to the County's youth and to foster better working relationships between entities.
- Departments do compete for the same pot of money for the same programs serving the same population of juveniles
- There is duplication of efforts between the DJJ, JAC, Providers and DHS in the assessment of juveniles for treatment plan development and information does not typically follow the juvenile as services move from entity to entity.
- There is an inordinate amount of duplication of data and reentering of information from system to system (both paper and electronic). The County is underwriting the cost of maintaining several databases, two of which contain similar data.
- There is a need for a single philosophy for the assessment, treatment and case management processes and better sharing of information to reduce duplication, better utilize limited resources, and track performance and to support new program development. For example while both JAC through the PAD and DPS through its several programs strive to achieve positive outcomes for arrested youth, both follow distinctly different operating procedures, programs and philosophies and utilize separate assessment tools and information systems with different levels of sophistication.
- Programs and processes should be measured by their outcome as opposed to workload

measures and the data obtained should support research and development initiatives. However, juvenile programs should not primarily focus on research with juvenile services being secondary.

- However, there is consensus that there needs to be more timely and conveniently available data and information available to facilitate the court processes, program and population analysis, placement of community oriented programs and to support new development. Simultaneously, there is concern regarding data security, privacy and potential for abuse.
- Under state rules, in-depth Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH) assessments are to be completed on all delinquent juveniles identified as at risk for these problems. Limited funding for these services is provided by the State of Florida Department of Children and Families. DHS administers this service (on JAC premises) but does not provide 24 hour per day coverage or serve 100% of juveniles identified as being at-risk. DHS reports that despite significant increase in coverage at the JAC, the existing level of funding is inadequate to facilitate further expansion of the services. However, for PAD eligible juveniles, a separate assessment tool, CASI, is used for assessment of drug and alcohol abuse and is available on a 24 hour basis.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Business Process**

The County should adopt a single philosophy in the treatment of juveniles entering the County system. All juveniles entering the system should undergo a timely and effective identification and intake process, effective screening for initial identification of problems to be treated and undergo more rigorous evaluations if needed where issues are more acute or require more specialized knowledge. All assessment instruments should meet some acceptable level of reliability and validity and should be based on best acceptable industry practices. With this assessment, experienced social workers and professionals should develop appropriate treatment plans, be accountable for effectively managing cases and ensuring the accountability of external providers. The county should endeavor to provide these social services in communities as needed to increase accessibility and convenience for juveniles and their families. In the longer term, the County should work with the state to begin to provide social services to troubled juveniles not slated for diversion when assessments indicate that such treatment is necessary. Policies can be developed to ensure that participation in such treatment programs prior to trial is not an admission of guilt or innocence. Additionally, these processes should provide comprehensive feedback and information necessary for performance evaluation, reporting to the courts, State Attorney and other stakeholders and to support analysis and research for development of new programs.

### **Organizational Structure**

In support of the above business process and the need for a single County entity to manage juvenile issues and information sharing, several organizational structures were considered. The options listed below were evaluated in terms of the unique strengths and challenges that the option offers and the best alternative selected.

1. No Change in Organizational Structure. JAC services would continue to focus on facilitating intake and initial assessment while continuing to provide treatment planning and case management to PAD eligible youth. DHS through DPS would continue to provide

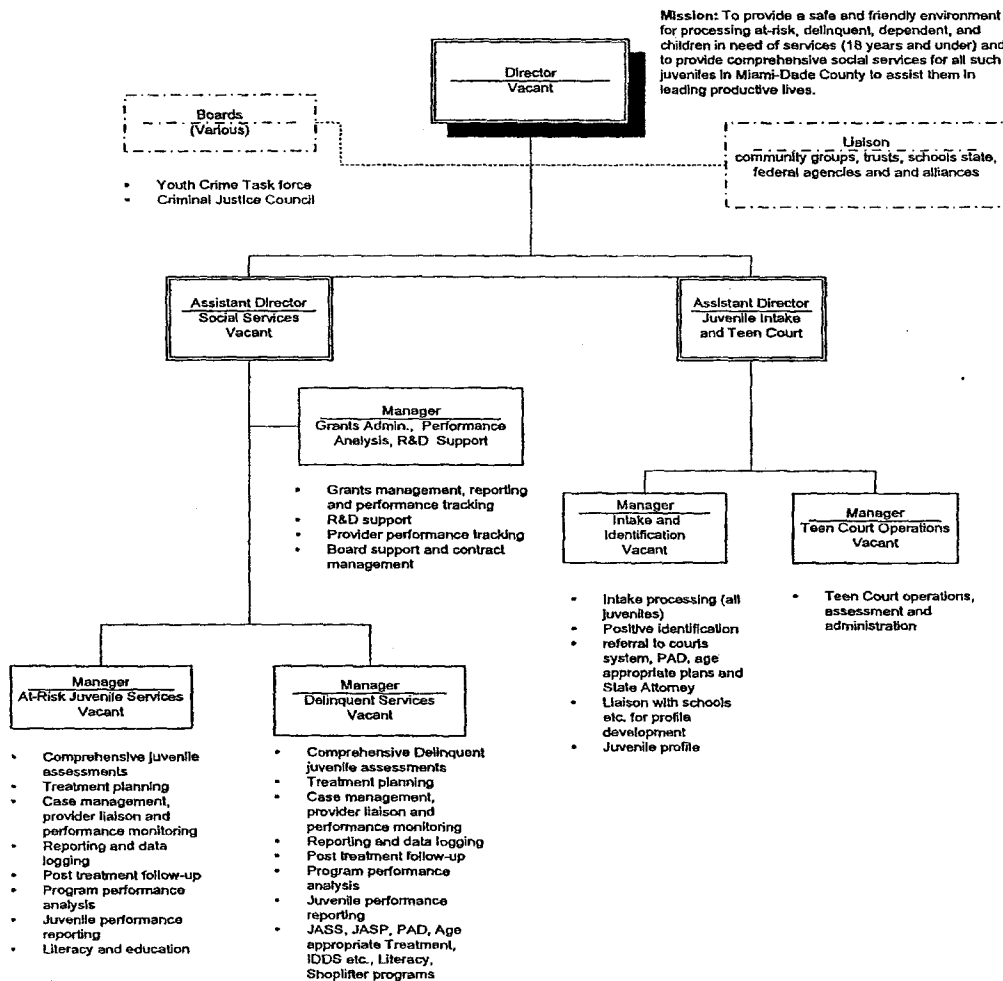
treatment planning and case management to JASS, JASP, and IDDS eligible youth under current procedures.

2. Consolidate all intake and clearance under one umbrella with a separate entity for assessments, evaluations, treatment plan development, case management and follow-up. Under this option JAC would solely be responsible for processing juvenile intake and coordinating with various partners for assessment and disposition of juveniles. JAC would not manage assessments, treatment planning or case management. The JAC facility would house related partners including DHS social workers and the State Attorney, School Board etc. needed for intake operations. All treatment plans and case management would be handled by DHS and other providers.
3. Consolidate intake and initial assessment to screen individuals to programs. The JAC would be a true clearinghouse, processing intake and initial assessments. Secondary assessments, treatment plan development and case management would be handled by DHS and other providers.
4. Consolidate all intake, assessment and treatment planning into a single entity under DHS or under JAC.
5. Create a single department responsible for all juvenile issues, both arrested and not arrested. This arrangement would fully consolidate all intake, assessment and treatment planning and case management under a single entity. This option incorporates the JAC and all troubled juvenile services now performed in other areas of the County under this single department with responsibility for all juvenile issues countywide.

The Committee recommends Option 5 - - creation of a new juvenile services department that will become the single County department responsible for managing juvenile programs. Establishment of the department (Figure 4) should follow a strict timeline for consolidating all intake, assessment and treatment planning and case management under a single entity using a shared communications infrastructure. The business processes should be based on the continuum of services outlined in Figure 2 which stresses the use of best practices, valid and reliable assessment tools, effective use of technology, superior outcome related case management and strict information reporting. The department will also ascertain that services are actually delivered within the community of need using the County's network of offices while employing the team approach currently adopted by DHS for developing treatment plans.

The advantages of this approach are that it centralizes and standardized assessment tools and the approach to assessment, treatment and follow-up using best business practices. Simultaneously, it allows the County to bring services to the juveniles within their environment through the network of field social workers and providers while providing opportunities for post program monitoring.

**Figure 4**  
**Organizational Chart: Recommended Juvenile Services Department**



A single organization sharing resources and information encourages a more seamless transition from juvenile intake through assessment and treatment and, reduces duplication and redundancy. Additionally, greater efficiencies can be achieved through cross-training and resource sharing to make the operations a true 24 hour business. Finally, the improvements associated with this approach provide a unique opportunity for the County to become the central intake and assessment body and to leverage resources to attract new funding and to develop new programs tailored for the diverse juvenile population.

The challenges of creating a single entity are highlighted by the need to appoint senior staff with the skills and abilities to manager this type of operation. Incumbents need to possess superior people and communications skills and the ability to forge excellent working relationships with all stakeholders and build trust. Stakeholders (aside from juveniles and their families) include various boards, alliances, trusts, academia, state and federal entities, municipalities and other County departments. Senior managers must understand social services delivery, hold juvenile welfare as the top priority, embrace and implement changes that support the service continuum philosophy,

employ updated and best business practices and use technology effectively.

Once the department is created, steps should be taken to work with funding agencies and donors to transfer program and institutional certification and accreditation to the new organization to ensure continuity of service and appropriate funding allocation.

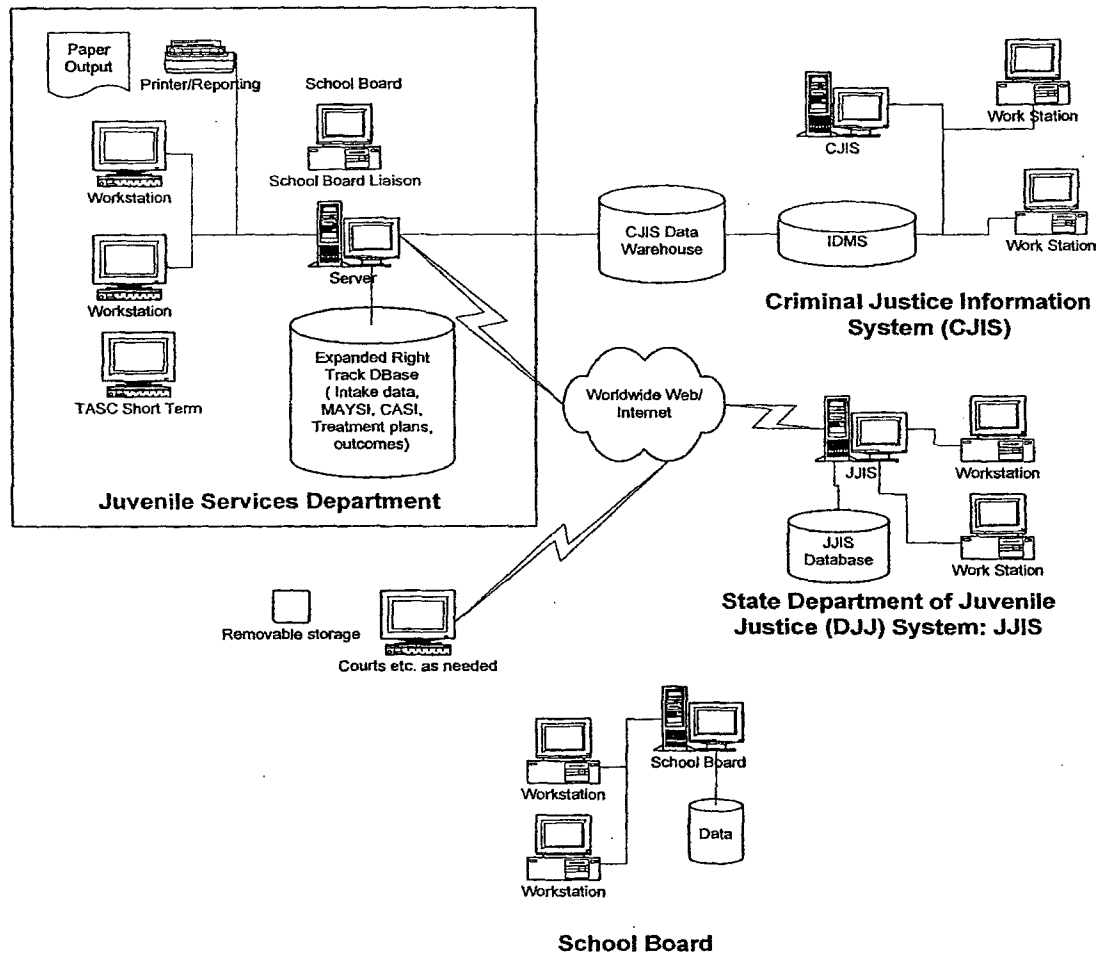
### **Information System Structure**

An assessment of information and data infrastructure was conducted. Generally, information is gathered by each agency (and sometimes separate divisions) and is retained by them without provision for electronic data interchange. In fact, the flow of information even by non electronic means is very limited and in many cases not timely. Consequently, information gathering has to be repeated (to the frustration of juveniles and parents) and in the case of the courts, information pertinent to court proceedings may not be immediately available. Of concern is the perception that access to data and protection of individual privacy particularly in mental health, drug and alcohol abuse cases is not appropriately safeguarded.

Having completed a high level review of the information issues, the Committee recommends an information management approach detailed in Figure 5. The new department would become the central area for aggregated data for case management, performance tracking, and research support. The Committee recommends that all social services data systems should be completely isolated from law enforcement hosting, access and use. However, given new developments in technology and the fact that data is stored in many locations it is not recommended that the new department create and maintain a comprehensive data warehouse. Instead, data should be taken from respective sources on an as needed, as predetermined basis. The committee therefore recommends the department endeavor to adopt the following concept:

- ✦ Expand the current Right Track database to store mug shot and intake information both from CJIS and for non-delinquent intake, capture all MAYSI, CASI, YLS and other data pertaining to juveniles, their treatment programs and successes.
- ✦ Use the CJIS data warehouse (Oracle database) to source all intake data for delinquents that enter the social services system. The CJIS data warehouse should be isolated from law enforcement access unlike the CJIS IDMS database from which the warehouse retrieves data.
- ✦ Develop links to other data sources to access data as required from other applications without the need to duplicate and store data on a separate department database. These include JJIS (administered by the state) and the School Board information where possible.
- ✦ Develop methods of loading TASC information into the Rite Track system in the interim. Continue to work with the state to replace TASC with the CASI data and assessment tool.
- ✦ Employ Right Track or other economic off-the-shelf case management tools and minimize customization of applications to minimize maintenance and upgrade costs.
- ✦ Computerize and include case data from DPS and other programs for future cases. However, preserve existing DPS data in a readable format for research purposes.

**Figure 5**  
**Proposed Information Management Concept**



- Create web links and GIS overlays to the upgraded Right Track database to provide needed information and summary reports (prearranged) to support other entities requiring specific data. These include Children's Trust, trial judges, state attorneys, DJJ and researchers etc.

### Budget and Staffing Issues

The total budget for the diversion programs operated by the JAC and DHS is \$10.4 million, and the total number of employees is 111. The general fund provides \$5.9 million, with the remainder from federal grants (\$3 million), state grants (\$1.4 million) and the JAC surcharge (\$100,000). Should the County create the new Juvenile Services Department; some immediate savings will be realized. Currently vacant supervisory and clerical support positions in DHS can be eliminated for an annual savings of approximately \$200,000.

The committee recognizes that the consolidation of juvenile diversion programs into the new department will require extensive knowledge of the juvenile justice system and the community

based agencies that provide services, and therefore additional personnel savings are not recommended at this time. It will be critical for current staff at DHS and the JAC to develop policies and procedures for central intake and assessment that allow the continuation of all diversion programs within a single coordinated entity. It is therefore recommended that the Director of the proposed department have the flexibility to work with all current stakeholders during the transition and to maintain good long term relationships. There will be additional savings identified later due to efficiencies gained from cross training and increased supervisory ratios.

The committee also recommends a modification to the information technology operation at the JAC. It is estimated that the JAC can save approximately \$600,000 from technology reconfigurations.